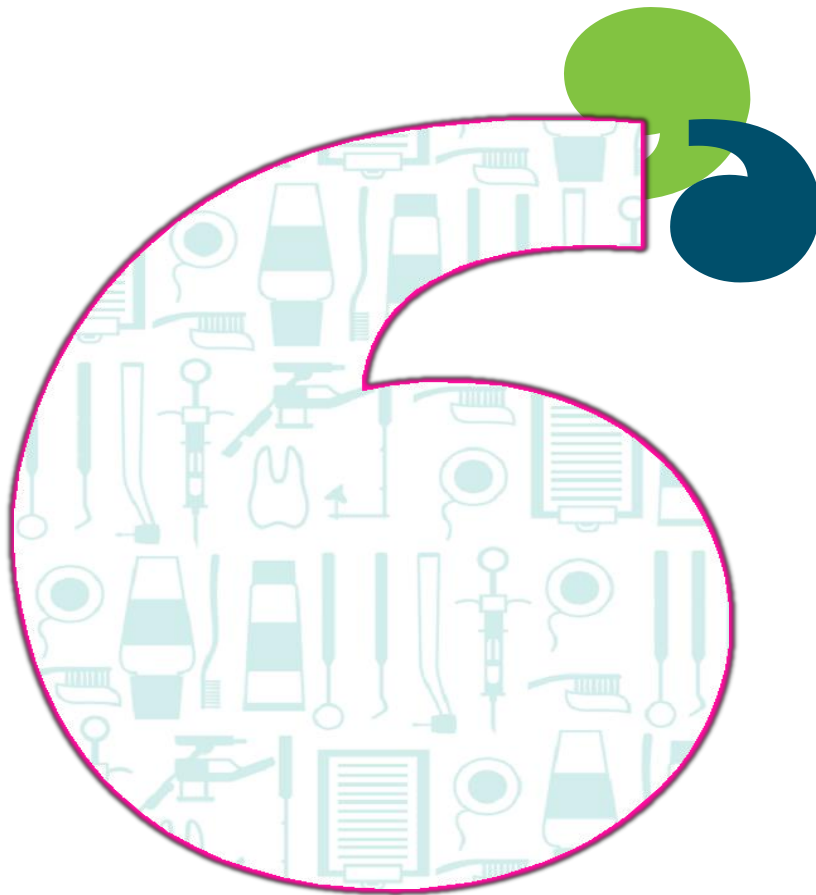


# Access to NHS Dental Services in Hertfordshire Enter and View visit report



## **Broadwater Dental Practice**

**302, Broadwater Crescent, Stevenage, SG2 8EU.**

**Stevenage Area**

**Premises visited:** Broadwater Dental Practice

**Date and Time of Visit:** 24.08.2018 11.00

**Visit Conducted By:** Jo Cahill and Sally Gale.

**NHS Contract Holder:** Dr Sonal Patel

### **Acknowledgements:**

We would like to thank the staff we spoke to on the visit.

### **Purpose for the Visit:**

Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HwH) is conducting an Enter and View visiting programme into Dental Practices in Hertfordshire following the outcomes of a joint project between HwH and Public Health locally. For further information our report can be found here:

<http://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Access-to-NHS-Dental-Services-in-Hertfordshire-2016.pdf>

The focus of the visits is to look at the:

- Environment
- Physical Access
- Information Access
- Equality and Diversity
- Complaints Handling

We are working with Public Health East of England and have informed NHS England locally. We are also working closely with the Central Region Inspection Manager - Dentistry at the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Local Dental Committee has also been informed and has been very supportive of this work.

## Methodology:

Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HwH) is the independent health and social care champion. Local Healthwatch is in place to gather the views and experiences of people accessing services, to use this information to influence decisions and to provide information and advice to the local community about health and social care services.

Legislation allows HwH authorised representatives to ‘Enter and View’ health and social care premises to see and hear for themselves how services are provided.

We are focussing on one area at a time that has been randomly selected. We began with a pilot in Welwyn and Hatfield, where 50% of the practices were randomly selected for an Enter and View visit; the summary report of our findings for the district can be found here:

<https://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/WelHat-Summary-Report-FINAL.pdf>

We have visited 25% of the St Albans and Harpenden District and East Herts District and are now focussing on 25% of dental practices with NHS contracts in the Stevenage area.

These Enter and View visits are ‘announced/unannounced’ visits where we notify the practice of our intention to visit within the next 4 weeks but do not give a specific date or time. Authorised HwH representatives use an observational checklist to record their findings and have thirteen specific subject areas to ask the person on duty at the Reception desk about.

Desktop research is carried out on the website of the dental practice and the practice’s entry in NHS Choices.

## Disclaimer

The report relates only to a specific visit (a point in time) and the report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available).

## 1. Introduction

The Broadwater Dental Practice is a general practice serving both NHS and private patients. It is located in a residential area approximately 3 miles from Stevenage Town centre.

Travel links to the practice are typical of a practice that is in a residential area in Stevenage. There is a bus stop close to the practice and it is served by the Arriva number 4 and 5 buses, which go from Stevenage Bus Station which is also close to the railway station.

## 2. Environment

### 2.1 Signage

The practice was easy to find with a large blue and white sign on the outside of the building.

The practice website has a Google map embedded on the site for patients to see the location and how to get there.

### 2.2 Car Parking

There is a small car park in the front of the practice for staff but can be used by patients as a pick up point or for parking if needed, on request. There are also some parking spaces on the road directly outside. Parking is also available on the opposite side of the road in a small shopping area.

There were no 'Blue Badge' accessible parking spaces.

### 2.3 Visible External Information

There is a large sign outside saying 'Broadwater Dental Practice' and giving the phone number.

There is a smaller sign by the door giving opening hours and the dentists names.

There is no indication they accept NHS patients or any out of hours information.

### 2.4 First impressions

The reception we received was very welcoming and friendly. The reception desk was along a narrow corridor and is, therefore quite private. There is a lower desk area for disabled access.

The waiting area is fairly small but not cramped. It is very clean and uncluttered with a friendly, pleasant atmosphere. There is adequate seating of uniform type, none with arms.

There is a large notice board with posters including dental health advice, details of emergency cover and treatment costs. However the 111 number is only on a leaflet and the notice board is overcrowded and some of the notices are overlapping.

There is also a TV, with the sound off showing dental health information.

There is a table of books for children, none about dentists and tooth care as these have all 'disappeared'.

## 3. Physical Access

### 3.1 Facilities

There is clear access to the entrance although cars are parked quite close. There is a step to the door, which looks quite narrow and the door bell is quite high. However, there is a ramp available if needed and wheelchairs pass easily through the door. The surface is a little uneven.

The reception is straight through from the front door with no further steps. It is quite narrow, but there is, apparently no problem with wheelchairs and there is no clutter or obstructions. However both the corridor and reception seem very narrow. There is a lower part of the desk for wheelchair users.

There is a downstairs toilet but it is not wheelchair accessible and the walls and furniture are all white with no contrast. There is no emergency cord

There are surgeries on both the ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor, but all treatments are available on the ground floor.

## 4. Information Access

### 4.1 NHS Charges

Cost of NHS treatment is clearly displayed and up to date.

The dentist discusses the cost of treatment with the patient at the consultation and gives them a form (purple form) with the information on.

### 4.2 Complaints

There is a notice about how to complain on the notice board but it is very small print. There is also a commitment statement.

If there is a complaint, the procedure is explained verbally. It goes to the receptionist initially and is passed to the dentist who will reply within 3 days. A Patient Complaints Procedure is also available detailing the complaints process.

Complaints are audited. They also have a 'Friends and Family' feedback box.

#### Summary of the Practice's Complaints Policy:

Named Responsible person	Acknowledgement Of complaint	Clear timescales for complaint	Additional information about organisations to take complaint to?	Support for complaints? Pofwer or Healthwatch?
Yes	3 working days	Yes	GDC NHS England PHO CQC	No

GDC General Dental Committee

PHO Parliamentary Health Ombudsman

CQC Care Quality Commission

### 4.3 Promoting oral health

There are posters and information leaflets in the waiting area. They are mostly aimed at adults.

### 4.4 Dental Practice and the NHS<sup>1</sup> website

The NHS website has been updated and facilities available match what was seen. There is some recent positive feedback about the practice from patients.

The practice's own website is modern looking and easy to understand. Information about the practice, treatments and photos of the dentists are available together with a price list for private patients and a link to the NHS website for detailed information for NHS patients.

However the complaints policy is not available on the website.

## 5. Supporting Patients

### 5.1 Communication

Patients are asked about communication requirements at the first visit but the receptionist often picks up problems before asking due to professional and personal experiences.

Messages are reinforced by the individual dentists as well as on the screen.

Communication with deaf patients is by lip-reading and pen and paper. There is no hearing loop. They were also not aware of the interpreter service that is available (given leaflet).

There hasn't been a problem with patients who cannot speak English, they usually bring an interpreter with them.

There is not a specified private space, but there is always a surgery or treatment room that can be used, or the office if a patient needs somewhere quiet to recover from treatment or wishes to have a conversation in private.

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<sup>1</sup> From September 2018, the NHS Choices website is now known as the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/>. The NHS website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) contains information to help people manage their health and care online.

### 5.2 Patients with specific requirements

Patients with learning difficulties, of whom they have quite a few, usually come with a carer. The receptionist was not aware of the purple folder which holds health information for people with learning disabilities.

Blind or partially sighted patients are assisted by staff. They are known by the staff.

Staff have been given basic training and know the safeguarding policy, contacts etc. The lead dentist is well-trained and has signed up all staff for an on-line safe-guarding course at the end of the year.

### 5.3 Medical Emergencies

There are 2 named First-aiders but all staff have basic life support training including use of the defibrillator which is repeated annually.

There is a protocol to follow- call for help, call 999 and the first-aider takes over.

There is a defibrillator and emergency drugs kit kept upstairs.

## 6. Summary of Findings

The Broadwater Dental Practice has many areas of good practice, and overall provides a good local service, as highlighted below:

1. Professional, knowledgeable and helpful staff aware of individual patient needs.
2. Clean, organised and welcoming environment.
3. Clear emergency procedures, with named first aid staff.
4. Good links to the NHS website online.

We also found the following areas for improvement:

1. Emergency /out of hours promotion
2. Additional support for patients with specific needs.

## 7. Recommendations

1. Ensure that the 111 phone number for out of hours/ emergency treatment is put up outside the practice.
2. Advertise outside of the practice that it accepts NHS patients as well as on the web-site.



3. Provide the complaints information on the notice board in larger print and make available on the website.
4. Update the complaints policy in line with the recommendations in the Dental Complaints Statement from the Regulation of Dental Services Programme Board to include Healthwatch Hertfordshire.
5. Tidy the notice board so notices don't overlap.
6. When next refitting/redecorating the toilet take account of comments here on colour contrasts and best practice to be more dementia friendly  
The following websites may be of interest:
  - a. <https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/...people...dementia/dementia-friendly-environment..>
  - b. [https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/.../dementia\\_friendly\\_environments\\_checklist.pdf](https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/.../dementia_friendly_environments_checklist.pdf)
7. Consider altering the toilet to be fully accessible including fitting an emergency cord.
8. Review arrangements for those with specific needs to cover:
  - a. provision of a hearing loop
  - b. awareness raising of the 'purple folder'  
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/disability/learning-disabilities/my-health/my-purple-folder.aspx>

### Response from Broadwater Dental Practice

1. The 111 number is on the website. We have instructed a company to do a new sign which states the emergency 111 number outside of our normal working hours. This will be displayed on our front window as soon as it is ready.
2. We have advertised we take on new NHS patients on our website now and we are in the process of making a sign to be put on our front window as well.
3. The complaints policy and procedure is now on the website. I am in the process of laminating a larger sign for our patients in the waiting room.
4. The complaints policy includes all information now including who to contact and how with the appropriate website addresses and numbers.

5. Tidy the notice board so notices don't overlap. This has been corrected.
6. I am looking into redecorating the toilet. I need permission from the landlord who is the council. This in line with making the toilet bigger and more accessible is on the agenda. However, as a leaseholder I am restricted and the building is over 40 years old. I am attempting to discuss the freehold with the council in order for me to make structural changes to the property in the future.
7. The emergency alarm has been ordered and will be fitted in due course
8. The hearing loop has been ordered and will be with us shortly.

Awareness raising of the 'purple folder'

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/disability/learning-disabilities/my-health/my-purple-folder.aspx>

We have looked at the above link as a practice so everyone is aware of the purple folder and its purpose.

*If you do have any further questions or any suggestions in the future, we would be happy to hear them and make amendments accordingly. Thank you for pointing the above out to us and we hope to provide a better service to our patients as a result of the findings.*